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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

Guatemalan Approach - Meeting, June 1, 1954

1. [] came as usual to the home of Lawrence, on the night of June 1, at Lawrence's request, which Lawrence told him was for the purpose of passing on to him and to [] an important development which should be of interest to the latter and his fellow officers. A decision has been made that steps will be taken to prevent further deliveries of arms to Guatemala. This decision is necessary in view of the Alfhem case. Further acquisitions will accentuate the dangers of the spread of Communism from Guatemala to Central America; there is no certainty whatever as to the ultimate possession of these arms in Guatemala, in spite of the stout assurances of the Colonel that they will remain in the absolute control of the Army -- a change of the top command, at the stroke of Arbenz' pen, could eliminate those officers who now claim to guarantee that the arms will not reach the Communists. Neither could there be any assurance that some quantity of the present shipment or those to come would not be diverted from Guatemala into the hands of subversive elements in neighboring countries. In the circumstances, any other decision on the part of the United States but effective measures to prevent further deliveries would be blind to the realities. It was desired that [] know of the decision, and pass it to his fellow officers, inasmuch as his professions of cooperation have been accepted at face value and this information is a gesture of cooperation in return.

2. [] started to say that [] is very sure of his information on the present security of the Alfhem shipment, but Lawrence interrupted and said that he could only find the Colonel's defense of the deal very disappointing. He ignored the obligation necessarily implicit in a deal with a

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Communist nation. The arms would never have been released by the Soviets had they not had full confidence that their delivery in Guatemala would be safe for Soviet purposes and would require the assumption of a corresponding obligation by the Guatemalan Government, which had obviously been breaking its neck to get arms anywhere it could, often by the most devious and almost disreputable means. Lawrence hoped that [] would tell the Colonel that his omission of this significant factor could not be overlooked, and that complacency in face of the most clear cut Communist intervention to date in Guatemala's internal affairs can only be considered disappointing and dangerous.

3. [] admitted that he was very depressed over the whole incident and also disappointed in the Colonel. He took hope, however, in word that an important message was expected by the Colonel the next day; a person was coming from Guatemala with this message and would have lunch with [] The message might be some specific line-up on the present plans of the Colonel's friends.

4. [] asked what the reaction was to the Colonel's suggestion on cutting off oil imports, on an unofficial basis. Lawrence told him that this would not be done; it was a kind of unilateral action which the United States had forsworn in coping with this problem, placing its trust in the inter-American system. Effective action could only be taken by all suppliers and if they acted together it would be obvious that they had received orders.

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